

NINETY-FIFTH DAY

Saturday, 30 March 1946

Morning Session

MARSHAL: May it please the Tribunal, the Defendant Doenitz is absent from Court this morning.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, Dr. Horn.

DR. HORN: On 16 February 1923 a conference of ambassadors transferred to Lithuania the sovereignty over the territory of Memel, which had already been annexed in 1923 by a surprise attack by Lithuanian troops. What caused Hitler to issue these directives for the reintegration of the Memel territory in 1939?

VON RIBBENTROP: The small territory of Memel, being the land mentioned in our National anthem, was always very dear to the hearts of the entire German people. The military facts are well known. It was placed under the control of the Allied Powers after the World War I and was later seized and occupied by Lithuanian soldiers by a *coup de main*. The country itself is ancient German territory, and it was natural that it should wish to become a part of Germany once more. As early as 1938, the Fuehrer referred to this problem in my presence as one which would have to be solved sooner or later. In the spring of 1939 negotiations were begun with the Lithuanian Government. These negotiations resulted in a meeting between Urbisk, the Lithuanian Foreign Minister, and myself, and an agreement was signed, by means of which the Memel territory was once more to become part of the Reich. That was in March 1939. I do not need to describe the sufferings which this region has had to endure in the past years. At any rate it was quite in accordance with the principle of the self-determination of peoples, that the will of the people of Memel was granted in 1939, and all that the agreement did, was to restore a perfectly natural state of affairs and one which would have had in any case to be established sooner or later.

DR. HORN: It was followed half a year later by the war with Poland. What, in your opinion, were the decisive causes which brought about this war?

VON RIBBENTROP: I gave evidence in this matter yesterday. The decisive factor was the English guarantee extended to Poland. I do not need to elaborate this point. This guarantee, combined

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with the Polish mentality, made it impossible for us to negotiate with the Poles or to come to an understanding with them. As for the actual outbreak of war, the following reasons for it can be given:

1. There is no doubt...

MR. DODD: If Your Honor please, I generalized this morning and I repeat my assertion of yesterday that I am most reluctant to interfere here with this examination. But as the witness has said himself, we

did go all through this yesterday, we have heard this whole story already in the occasion of yesterday afternoon's session. My point is that the witness himself, before going into his answer, stated that he had already given the causes for the war, yesterday afternoon, and I quite agree. I think it is entirely unnecessary for him to go over it again today. I might add parenthetically that we had some great doubt about the relevancy or the materiality of it even on yesterday's occasion, but surely we do not have to hear him again.

THE PRESIDENT: What do you say to that, Dr. Horn?

DR. HORN: I would like to say that the former German Minister for Foreign Affairs, who is accused of being co-responsible for a war of aggression, might perhaps say a few words about the decisive causes, which according to him led to this war. The defendant of course, should not repeat what he said yesterday. I want him to give only some details on points to which he referred in only a general way yesterday, and it will not take up very much of the Tribunal's time.

THE PRESIDENT: Very well, Dr. Horn, provided, of course, that he does not go over the identical ground that he went over yesterday.

DR. HORN: Please tell us very briefly the facts that determined your attitude.

VON RIBBENTROP: There are just a few brief facts that I would like to mention, and they concern only the events of these last 2 days:

First of all, there is no doubt that on 30 and 31 August, England was well aware of the extreme tension of the situation. This fact was communicated to Hitler in a letter, and Hitler said that the decision must be made and a way of solving the problem found, with all possible speed. This was Chamberlain's letter to Hitler.

Secondly: England knew that the proposals made by Germany were reasonable, for we know that England was in possession of these proposals in the night of 30 to 31 August. Ambassador Henderson himself declared that these proposals were reasonable.

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Thirdly: It would have been possible, therefore, on 30 or 31 August, to give a hint to Warsaw and tell the Poles to begin some sort of negotiations with us. This could have been done in three different ways: Polish negotiator could have flown to Berlin, which would have been, as the Fuehrer said, a matter of an hour to an hour and a half; or, a meeting could have been arranged between the foreign ministers or the heads of the states to take place on the frontiers; or else, Ambassador Lipski could simply have been instructed at least to receive the German proposals. If these instructions had been given, the crisis would have been averted and diplomatic negotiations could have been initiated. England herself, had she wished to do so, could have sent her ambassador to represent her at the negotiations, which action, after what had gone before, would undoubtedly have been regarded very favorably by Germany.

This, however, did not take place, and, as I gather from documents which I saw for the first time here, nothing was done during this period to alleviate this very-tense situation. Chauvinism is natural to the Poles; and we know from Ambassador Henderson's own words and from the testimony of Mr. Dahlerus that Ambassador Lipski used very strong language illustrative of Polish mentality. Because Poland was very well aware that she would, in all circumstances, have the assistance of England and France, she assumed an attitude which made war inevitable to all intents and purposes. I believe that these facts really are of some importance for the historical view of that entire period. I would like to add that I personally regretted this turn of events. All my work of 25 years was destroyed by this war; and up to the last minute I made every possible effort to avert this war. I believe that even Ambassador Henderson's documents prove that I did make these attempts. I told Adolf Hitler that it was Chamberlain's most ardent desire to have good relations with Germany and to reach an agreement with her; and I even sent a special messenger to the Embassy to see Henderson, to tell him how earnestly the Fuehrer desired this, and to do everything in his power to make this desire of Adolf Hitler's clear to his government.

DR. HORN: Denmark and Norway were occupied in April 1940. You had concluded a non-aggression pact with Denmark on 31 May 1939 and on the basis of these facts you are accused by the Prosecution of perfidious diplomacy. When and in what way did you receive knowledge of the imminent occupation of Denmark and Norway?

VON RIBBENTROP: It had always been the Fuehrer's wish and mine to keep Scandinavia neutral. In accordance with Adolf Hitler's policy, I did my best to prevent the war from spreading.

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One day in April 1940 Hitler summoned me to the Chancellery. He told me that he had received reports stating that the British were on the point of occupying Norway, or of landing troops there. He had therefore decided to occupy Norway and Denmark on the morning of the day after next. That was the first I heard of it. I was amazed; and the Fuehrer then showed me the documentary evidence which he had received through his intelligence service. He ordered me to prepare notes at once, informing the Norwegian and the Danish governments that German troops were about to march in. I reminded the Fuehrer that we had a non-aggression pact with Denmark and that Norway was a neutral country, and told him that reports received from our Legation at Oslo did not indicate any landing. When the documents were shown to me, however, I realized how grave the situation was and that these reports had to be taken seriously.

The next day along with my assistants, I prepared diplomatic notes to be sent by plane to Oslo and Copenhagen on 8 April. On that day we worked day and night in order to finish these notes. The Fuehrer had given orders that these notes were to arrive shortly before the German occupation. The order was executed.

The occupation of Denmark was completed without trouble, as far as I know. I believe that hardly a shot was fired. As soon as we had occupied the country, we negotiated with the Danish Government,

under Stauning, and made agreements so that everything should go on without disturbances and as far as possible in a friendly atmosphere. Denmark's integrity was fully guaranteed, and matters went on, even in the later stages, in a comparatively quiet and orderly way.

The situation was rather different in Norway. Resistance had developed. We tried to keep the King of Norway in the country and to induce him to stay there. We negotiated with him but we had no success. He went north, I believe, to Narvik; and so there was no longer any possibility of negotiating with Norway. Norway was occupied, as you know, and a civil administration established. After this date, Norway was no longer any concern of the Foreign Office; but one thing I should like to add: that the Fuehrer told me repeatedly that the measures he had taken were extremely necessary, and that documents found after the landing of British troops in Norway, and published at a later date, showed that the occupation of these countries and the landing in Norway had doubtlessly been planned for a long time by England.

Frequent allusions have been made in the course of this Trial to the great sufferings of the Norwegian and Danish peoples. I personally am of the opinion that whatever one may think of the

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German occupation, for all intents and purposes it prevented Scandinavia from becoming a theater of war, and I believe, that in that way the Norwegian and Danish peoples were spared untold suffering. If war had broken out between Germany and the Scandinavian countries, these people would have been exposed to much greater suffering and privation.

DR. HORN: Did you have anything to do with Quisling before the occupation of Norway?

VON RIBBENTROP: I must explain that the name of Quisling became known only at a much later date. Before the occupation of Norway his name meant nothing to me. It is true that Herr [Rosenberg](#) contacted me with a view to assisting pro-German Scandinavians within the frame of the former Nordic Movement (Nordische Bewegung) and that was a perfectly natural thing to do. At that period, we also provided funds for newspapers, propaganda, and also for political activities in Norway.

At these discussions, I remember this distinctly, no mention was ever made of any seizing of political power through certain circles in Norway, or of military operations.

DR. HORN: What influence did the Foreign Office have in Denmark after the occupation of the country?

VON RIBBENTROP: After the occupation of Denmark the Foreign Office was represented by a minister at the Danish Court. Later, because of certain events -- I believe it would take too long to enumerate them -- the Danish Government resigned and a Reich Plenipotentiary was appointed. There was also a Military Commander in Denmark and later on a Higher SS and Police Leader.

The activities of the minister of the Danish Court were those of an ordinary and very influential minister, who tried to straighten out all the difficulties which might naturally arise during an

occupation; and later on the function of the Reich Plenipotentiary, according to my instructions, was to treat Denmark, not as an enemy of Germany, but as a friend. This was always guiding principle in Denmark and even at a much later period, when more serious difficulties arose as a result of the intensified warfare, there was really complete quiet and calm in Denmark throughout the long years of war and we were very well satisfied with conditions there.

Later, because of the activities of enemy agents against our measures, *et cetera*, things took a more rigorous turn; the Reich Plenipotentiary always had instructions from me not to aggravate things but to straighten them out and to work on the continuation of good relations between the Danes and the Germans. His task was not always an easy one; but on the whole, I believe, he did his work satisfactorily.

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DR. HORN: Since when and how did you receive reports about the intention of the Franco-British General Staff to include Belgium and Holland in their theater of operations?

VON RIBBENTROP: Great importance has obviously been attached to this question during the proceedings here as well. The situation was as follows: In 1937, Germany declared that she had made an agreement with Belgium in which Germany undertook to respect Belgium's strict neutrality on condition that Belgium on her part would maintain her neutrality.

After the Polish campaign the Fuehrer told me on several occasions that, according to his intelligence reports, the enemy intended to cross Dutch and Belgian territory to attack the Ruhr. We also sometimes received reports of this kind; these were of a less concrete nature.

In any event, Adolf Hitler believed that an attack on the Ruhr district, which was Germany's most vital area, was a possibility that had to be reckoned with at all times. I had a good many discussions with the Fuehrer about that time, regarding the importance of Belgian neutrality for the world in general; but I knew, too, that we were involved in a struggle, a hard struggle of larger dimensions where completely different standards would have to be applied.

In the course of events, in the spring of 1940, our intelligence reports about an attack of this kind became more and more concrete, and I may mention that documents belonging to the French General Staff, *et cetera*, which were found later and published by the German Foreign Office, proved conclusively that the reports which Germany had received were absolutely true and that an attack on the Ruhr area had actually been repeatedly considered by the enemies of Germany, that is, by those who were her enemies at the time.

In this connection I would like to call attention to a document concerning a meeting between Prime Minister Chamberlain and M. Daladier in Paris, at which Mr. Chamberlain suggested an attack for the destruction of the vitally important industrial areas of the Ruhr through the so-called "chimneys" of Holland and Belgium. I believe this document is here and has been granted to the Defense.

The situation before the offensive in the West on which the Fuehrer had decided was therefore such that an attack by the enemy through these great areas had to be expected at any time. For this reason he decided to attack across this area, across these two neutral territories, and I believe that after the attack -- the military authorities will confirm this -- further documents were found and facts established, which as far as I remember, showed that the closest co-operation had existed between the Belgian and I believe also the Dutch General Staffs, and the British and French General Staffs.

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Of course it is always a very grave matter in such a war to violate the neutrality of a country, and you must not think that we dismissed it, so to speak, with a wave of the hand. It cost me many a sleepless night and I would like to remind you that the same questions arose on the other side and other statesmen also discussed them at the time. I remind you of a statement to the effect that "one got tired of thinking of the rights of neutrals"; and this assertion was made by the eminent British statesman, Winston Churchill.

DR. HORN: What caused Germany to violate the integrity of Luxembourg?

VON RIBBENTROP: Luxembourg was in much the same situation as Belgium and Holland. It is a very small country, and obviously in a war on the scale of this one the armies cannot suddenly bypass one particular country. But I would like to point out just one thing in connection with Luxembourg: The summer before, that is during the summer of 1939, we had started negotiations with France and Luxembourg with a view to making perfectly definite pacts of neutrality to be established by treaties. At first, the negotiations seemed to be going very well; but they were suddenly broken off by both France and Luxembourg. At the time we did not understand the reason for this, but I know that when I reported it to the Fuehrer, it made him a little distrustful as to the motives that may have been of importance on the other side. We never knew the exact reason.

DR. HORN: How far was the German Foreign Office able to exert its influence in France after the partial occupation of the country?

VON RIBBENTROP: After the occupation or partial occupation of France, although we were not yet at peace with France and there was therefore really no reason to resume diplomatic relations, as only an armistice had been declared, the Fuehrer, at my request,, appointed an ambassador to the Vichy Government. I was especially anxious for this to be done because it had always been my aim to come to a closer co-operation with France. I would like to emphasize the fact that I resumed my efforts in this direction immediately after the victory and the armistice. I have -- the Fuehrer readily agreed to this and also initiated the so-called Montoire policy at my request, by meeting Marshal Petain at Montoire after a meeting with General Franco. I was present at this meeting.

I believe I may say in the interests of historical truth that Adolf Hitler's treatment of the head of the defeated French nation is probably unexampled and must be described as chivalrous. There cannot be

many parallel cases in history. Adolf Hitler immediately made proposals to Marshal Petain for a closer collaboration between

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Germany and France, but Marshal Petain, even at the very first meeting, adopted an attitude of marked reserve towards the victor, so that, to my great personal regret this first meeting came to an end somewhat more quickly than I had really hoped it would. In spite of this, we continued to try to carry out a systematic policy of conciliation and even of close collaboration with France. Our lack of success was probably due to the natural attitude of France and the will of influential circles. Germany did not fail to make every effort.

DR. HORN: What influence did you yourself, and the German Foreign Office have on conditions in Belgium after the occupation?

VON RIBBENTROP: We had no influence whatsoever on conditions in Belgium or in Holland. The Fuehrer set up military and civilian administrations, and the Foreign Office had no further connection with them, beyond being represented by a liaison officer who, in practice, had nothing or almost nothing to do. I would like to add that it was rather different in France, inasmuch as we were naturally in a position to exercise a certain amount of influence on the Vichy Government through our ambassador. I did so, for instance, in matters of finance.

We have heard here in court a good deal about the activities of Herr Henimen. I should just like to say that, no matter how his powers may have been defined, I appointed him for the express purpose of preventing inflation and the collapse of the French currency. That was the special mission entrusted to Hemmen. Even if France was no longer willing to co-operate politically with Germany, she was undoubtedly of economic importance to us; and I wanted to keep her on a sound basis and to preserve her system of finance. That was the real reason for Herr Hemmen's mission.

DR. HORN: What plans did Hitler have with regard to his foreign policy after the conclusion of the campaign in the West?

VON RIBBENTROP: After the conclusion of the campaign in the West, I discussed future developments with the Fuehrer at his headquarters. I asked him what his further intentions were with regard to England. The Fuehrer and I proposed at the time, whether we had not better make another attempt with England. The Fuehrer seemed to have had the same idea and was delighted with my proposal for making a fresh peace offer or attempting to make peace with England. I asked the Fuehrer whether I should draft such a treaty for this case. The Fuehrer spontaneously replied: "No, that will not be necessary, I will do that myself, that is, there is no need to do it at all."

He said, word for word: "If England is ready for peace, there are only four points to be settled. Above all, after Dunkirk, I do not want England in any circumstances to suffer a loss of prestige,

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so under no circumstances do I want a peace which would involve that."

With regard to the contents of such a treaty, he enumerated four points:

1. Germany is ready to recognize in all respects the existence of the British Empire.
2. England must, therefore, acknowledge Germany to be the greatest continental power, if only because of the size of her population.
3. He said, "I want England to return the German colonies. I would be satisfied with one or two of them, because of the raw materials."
4. He said that he wanted a permanent alliance with England for life and death.

DR. HORN: Is it correct that at the end of 1939, you heard from Hitler that conferences had taken place between the Greek and French General Staffs and that French officers had been sent to Greece?

VON RIBBENTROP: Yes, that is correct. It came within the scope of the Fuehrer's policy for preventing the war from spreading, as entrusted to me, that I should keep a sharp watch on these things and, of course, especially on the Balkans; Adolf Hitler wished in all circumstances to keep the Balkans out of the war.

As for Greece the situation was as follows: Greece had accepted a British guarantee. Also, there were close links between Yugoslavia and England and, especially, France. Through the Fuehrer's intelligence service and through military channels we repeatedly heard about staff conferences between Athens, Belgrade, London and Paris, which were supposed to be taking place. About that time I summoned the Greek Minister on several occasions and drew his attention to these things. I asked him to be very careful, and told him that Germany had no intention of taking any steps against the Greek people, who had always been very much liked in Germany.

However, further intelligence reports came in to the effect that Britain had been given permission to establish naval bases in Greece. I believe -- and all this led up to the intervention of Italy, which we did not desire at all -- I believe Reich Marshal Goering has already discussed this topic. It was impossible to prevent this intervention, for when we arrived in Florence -- I was with Adolf Hitler at the time -- for his conference with Mussolini, it was too late and Mussolini said: "We are on the march."

The Fuehrer was very much upset and depressed when he heard this news. We then had to do everything in our power so that the war between Greece and Italy might at least be prevented from

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spreading. Yugoslav policy was naturally the decisive factor here. I tried in every possible way to establish closer links with Yugoslavia and to win her over to the Tripartite Pact which had already been concluded then. It was difficult at first, but with the help of the Regent Prince Paul and the Zvetkovitch Government, we finally succeeded in inducing Yugoslavia to join the Tripartite Pact. We

knew very well, however, that there was strong opposition in Belgrade to the adhesion of Yugoslavia to the Tripartite Pact and to any kind of closer connection with Germany. In Vienna at the time the Fuehrer said that the signing of the Tripartite Pact seemed like a funeral to him.

All the same, we were very much surprised when -- I think it was 2 or 3 days after the conclusion of this pact -- the government was overthrown by General Simovic's coup and a new government was set up which certainly could not be described as friendly to Germany.

Reports came from Belgrade concerning close collaboration with the British General Staff. I believe American observers in this field are informed on the point, and during the last few months I have heard from English sources that British elements had played a part in this coup. That was quite natural, for we were at war.

All these events caused the Fuehrer to intervene in the Balkans, first of all, to help Italy, whom the courageous resistance of the Greeks had forced into a very difficult position in Albania; and secondly, to prevent a possible attack from the north on the part of Yugoslavia, which might have made the Italian situation still more serious or even brought about a crushing defeat for our Italian ally.

Those were the military and strategic factors which induced the Fuehrer to intervene and to conduct the campaign against Greece and Yugoslavia.

DR. HORN: If I understood you correctly, Greece put bases on her territory at the disposal of the British Navy before the Italian attack in October 1940, in spite of the fact that she had declared her neutrality. Is that correct?

VON RIBBENTROP: That was the substance of the military reports which I received.

DR. HORN: In September 1939, General Gamelin, then French Commander-in-Chief, approved the project for an Allied landing at Salonika. When did Germany receive knowledge of this intention?

VON RIBBENTROP: We first learned the exact details from the files of the French General Staff on the outbreak of war. But I know that from the very beginning all the reports which the Fuehrer received from the various intelligence branches of the Reich caused

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him to fear the possibility that a new front might be built up at any moment in Salonika as had happened in the first World War, and that would mean a considerable dispersal of the German forces.

DR. HORN: In September 1939 you made a second trip to Moscow. What was the reason for this visit and what was discussed there?

VON RIBBENTROP: My second visit to Moscow was made necessary by the ending of the Polish campaign. I flew to Moscow toward the end of September, and this time I received an especially cordial reception. The situation then was such that we had to create clear conditions in the Polish territory. Soviet troops had occupied the eastern regions of Poland, and we had occupied the western parts up to

the line of demarcation previously agreed upon. Now we had to fix a definite line of demarcation. We were also anxious to strengthen our ties with the Soviet Union and to establish cordial relations with them.

An agreement was reached in Moscow, fixing a definite line in Poland, and an economic treaty to put economic relations on an entirely new basis was envisaged. A comprehensive treaty regulating the exchange of raw materials was envisaged and later on concluded. At the same time this pact was politically amplified into a treaty of friendship, as is well known. One question remained, about the territory of Lithuania. For the sake of establishing particularly trustful relations between Moscow and Berlin, the Fuehrer renounced influence over Lithuania, and gave Russia predominance in Lithuania by this second treaty, so that there was now a clear understanding between Germany and Soviet Russia with respect to territorial claims as well.

DR. HORN: Is it correct that on 15 June 1940, after the delivery of an ultimatum, the Russians occupied the whole of Lithuania, including the part which was still German, without notifying the Reich government?

VON RIBBENTROP: There was no special agreement concerning this, but it is well known that these areas were actually occupied.

DR. HORN: What further Russian measures caused Hitler anxiety as to Russia's attitude and intentions?

VON RIBBENTROP: Various things made the Fuehrer a little sceptical about the Russian attitude. One was the occupation of the Baltic States, which I have just mentioned. Another was the occupation of Bessarabia and North Bukovina after the French campaign and of which we were simply informed without any previous consultation. The King of Romania asked us for advice at that time. The Fuehrer, out of loyalty to the Soviet pact, advised the King of Romania to accept the Russian demands and to evacuate Bessarabia.

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In addition, the war with Finland in 1940 caused a certain uneasiness in Germany, among the German people who had strong sympathies for the Finns. The Fuehrer felt himself bound to take this into account to some extent. There were two other points to consider. One was that the Fuehrer received a report on certain communist propaganda in German factories which alleged that the Russian trade delegation was the center of this propaganda. Above all, we heard of military preparations being made by Russia. I know after the French campaign he spoke to me about this matter on several occasions and said that approximately 20 German divisions had been concentrated near the East Prussian border; and that very large forces -- I happen to remember the number, I think about 30 army corps -- were said to be concentrated in Bessarabia. The Fuehrer was perturbed by these reports and asked me to watch the situation closely. He even said that in all probability the 1939 Pact had been concluded for the sole purpose of being able to dictate economic and political conditions to us. In any case, he now proposed to

take countermeasures. I pointed out the danger of preventive wars to the Fuehrer, but the Fuehrer said that German-Italian interests must come first in all circumstances, if necessary. I said I hoped that matters would not go so far and that, at all events, we should make every effort through diplomatic channels to avoid this.

DR. HORN: In November, from 12 to 14 November 1940 to be exact, the Russian Foreign Commissar Molotov visited Berlin. On whose initiative did this visit take place and what was the subject under discussion?

VON RIBBENTROP: The conferences with Molotov at Berlin concerned the following subjects: I might interpolate that when we were trying to effect a settlement with Russia through diplomatic channels, I wrote a letter to Marshal Stalin, with the Fuehrer's permission, in the late autumn of 1940 and invited Mr. Molotov to come to Berlin. This invitation was accepted, and Russo-German relations were discussed in their entirety during a conversation between the Fuehrer and Mr. Molotov. I was present at this discussion. Mr. Molotov first discussed with the Fuehrer Russo-German relations in general and then went on to mention Finland and the Balkans. He said that Russia had vital interests in Finland. He said that when the delimitation of zones of influence had been settled, it had been agreed that Finland should be included in the Russian sphere of influence. The Fuehrer replied that Germany also had extensive interests in Finland, especially with regard to nickel, and furthermore, it should not be forgotten that the entire German people sympathized with the Finns. He would therefore ask Mr. Molotov to compromise on this question. This topic was brought up on several occasions.

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With regard to the Balkans, Mr. Molotov said that he wanted a non-aggression pact with Bulgaria, and generally closer ties with Bulgaria. He also thought of establishing bases there. The Fuehrer replied, or rather asked, whether Bulgaria had approached Molotov in the matter, but that apparently was not the case. The Fuehrer then said that he could not express any opinion on this question until he had discussed it with Mussolini, who was his ally and who was naturally interested in the Balkans too.

Various other points were also discussed, but no final settlement was reached at this discussion. The discussion rather proceeded on lines which seemed to me not those best calculated to lead to a bridging of all contrasts. As soon as the meeting was over, I requested the Fuehrer to authorize me to take up again the discussions with Mr. Molotov and asked him if he would concur in my discussing with Mr. Molotov the possibility of Russia's joining the Tripartite Pact. That was one of our aims at the time. The Fuehrer agreed to this and I had another long discussion with the Russian Foreign Commissar. In this conversation the same topics were discussed. Mr. Molotov alluded to Russia's vital interest in Finland; he also referred to Russia's deep interest in Bulgaria, the kinship between the Russian and the Bulgarian people, and her interest in other Balkan countries. It was finally agreed that on his return to Moscow he should speak to Stalin and try to arrive at some solution of the question. I proposed that they join the Tripartite Pact and further proposed that I should discuss with the Fuehrer the various points which had been raised. Perhaps we could still find a way out. The general result of this conversation was that

Molotov went back to Moscow with the intention of clearing up through the embassies the differences still existing between us.

THE PRESIDENT: Dr. Horn, surely, as these negotiations did not eventuate in any agreement, they are very remote from anything we are considering. You are not suggesting that any agreements were come to, are you?

DR. HORN: No. I wanted to prove only that Germany made efforts to prevent the conflict with Russia.

THE PRESIDENT: There was no question of a conflict with Russia in any of these negotiations.

DR. HORN:]STo. It is evident from all the efforts made by Germany, and from Ribbentrop's testimony, that they wanted to eliminate as far as possible any differences which might lead to a conflict between Germany and Russia. As regards a deliberate -- the Prosecution assert that the pact with Russia was made with the intention of violating it and attacking Russia, that it was intended to attack Russia all along. I want to prove with this evidence that this was not the case.

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THE PRESIDENT: It seems to me to be very remote, indeed. It only goes to show that Ribbentrop entered into certain negotiations with Russia which had no result. That is all. You may go on, Dr. Horn.

DR. HORN: In one of your previous answers you spoke of troop concentrations on the East Prussian border mentioning 20 German divisions. I assume that that was just a *lapsus linguae* on your part.

VON RIBBENTROP: I meant to say Russian divisions. The Fuehrer, I know, mentioned this many times. He said, I believe, that we had only one division in the whole of East Prussia.

DR. HORN: Was not the occupation of Balkan territory by the Russians the reason for your discussion with Molotov?

VON RIBBENTROP: I did not quite understand the question. Please repeat it.

DR. HORN: Was not the Russian occupation of territory in the Balkans and also in the Baltic States the reason for inviting Molotov to Berlin?

VON RIBBENTROP: In the Balkans, no; for there were no Russian occupation zones there. But it did apply to Bessarabia which is not a Balkan country in the strictest sense of the term. It was the occupation of Bessarabia, which took place with surprising speed, and that of Northern Bukovina, which had not been agreed to fall within the Russian sphere of influence in the discussions at Moscow -- and which was, as the Fuehrer said at the time, really an old Austrian crown land -- and the occupation of the Baltic territories. It is true that this caused the Fuehrer a certain amount of anxiety.

DR. HORN: Is it correct that in the summer of 1940 you and Hitler were informed that a Franco-British military commission was in Moscow?

VON RIBBENTROP: Yes -- no. What was the date, please?

DR. HORN: The summer of 1940; that is, after June 1940?

VON RIBBENTROP: Yes, that is correct. Such reports came in continually, but I cannot say now how far that was correct for the summer of 1940. When I arrived in Moscow in 1939, I found French and English military commissions there, with instructions from the British and French governments to conclude a military alliance between Russia, England, and France. This was part of the policy which the Fuehrer described as "British encirclement policy" in his speech to the Reichstag, I think on 28 May, and which Mr. Churchill in 1936 in the embassy had made quite evident to me.

DR. HORN: Is it correct that at these conferences between ...

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SIR DAVID MAXWELL-FYFE: My Lord, I am trying very hard to follow this. I wonder if I could be helped? Did the witness refer to 1940? I wanted to get it clear whether it was 1940 or 1939. It makes a big difference.

THE PRESIDENT: Do you mean about an English mission? 1940, I believe.

VON RIBBENTROP: I was going to reply to that. I have already said that I am not quite sure about 1940; I said only that these reports existed. I know, however, that this mission was there in 1939.

DR. HORN: During Molotov's visit to Berlin in the year 1940, was any allusion made to the fact that Russia was not satisfied with the last Russo-Finnish peace treaty and that she intended to annex the whole of Finland.

VON RIBBENTROP: It was not as definite as that, but it was clear from her attitude that Russia considered Finland as her sphere of influence. What measures Russia intended to take there is not in my power to say.

DR. HORN: On 5 April 1941 a Russian-Yugoslav Non-aggression and Friendship Pact was concluded. What was the effect of this conclusion upon Germany?

VON RIBBENTROP: This seemed to the Fuehrer to confirm the fact that Russia had deviated from the 1939 policy. He considered it an affront, to use his own words, for he said that he had concluded a pact with the other government and Russia only a short time afterwards had concluded a pact with the government which was definitely hostile to Germany.

DR. HORN: Is it true that Hitler thereupon forbade you to take any further diplomatic steps in connection with Russia?

VON RIBBENTROP: That is correct. I told the Fuehrer at the time that we must now make even more determined efforts to come to an understanding about Russia's attitude. He said that would be useless and he did not think it would change the Russian attitude.

DR. HORN: What were the causes which led to the outbreak of the conflict with Russia?

VON RIBBENTROP: I must say this here: In the winter of 1940-41 the Fuehrer was confronted with the following situation. I think it is most important to make this clear.

England was not prepared to make peace. The attitude of the United States of America and of Russia was therefore of decisive importance to the Fuehrer. He told me the following about this -- I had a very lengthy discussion with him on the subject and asked him to give me clearly defined diplomatic directives. He said that

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Japan's attitude was not absolutely secure for Germany; although we had concluded the Tripartite Pact, there were very strong oppositional elements at work in Japan and we could not know what position Japan would take; Italy had proved to be a very weak ally in the Greek campaign. Germany might, therefore, have to stand entirely alone.

After that, he spoke of the American attitude. He said that he had always wanted to have good relations with the United States, but that in spite of extreme reserve, the United States had grown steadily more hostile to Germany. The Tripartite Pact had been concluded with a view to keeping the United States out of the war, as it was our wish and our belief that in that way those circles in the United States which were working for peace and for good relations with Germany could be strengthened. We were not successful in this, however, as the attitude of the United States was not favorable to Germany after the conclusion of the Tripartite Pact. The Fuehrer's basic idea, and mine, namely, that if the United States did enter the war in Europe, they would have to reckon with a war on two fronts and therefore would prefer not to intervene, was not realized.

Now the further question of Russia's attitude came up and in this connection the Fuehrer made the following statement: We have a friendship pact with Russia. But Russia has assumed the attitude which we have just been discussing and which causes me a certain amount of concern. We do not know, therefore, what to expect from that side. More and more troop movements were reported; he had himself taken military countermeasures, the exact nature of which was, and still is, unknown to me. However, his great anxiety was that Russia on the one hand and the United States and Britain on the other, might proceed against Germany. On the one hand, therefore, he had to reckon with an attack by Russia and on the other hand with a joint attack by the United States and England, that is to say with large-scale landings in the West. All these considerations finally caused the Fuehrer to take preventive measures, to start a preventive war against Russia on his own initiative.

DR. HORN: What actual political reasons were there for the Tripartite Pact?

VON RIBBENTROP: The Tripartite Pact was concluded, I believe, in September 1940. The situation was as I have just described it, that is to say, the Fuehrer was alarmed that the United States might sooner or later enter the war. For this reason I wanted to do all I could, in the field of diplomacy, to

strengthen Germany's position. I thought we had Italy as an ally, but Italy showed herself to be a weak ally.

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As we could not win France over to our side, the only friend apart from the Balkan States was Japan. In the summer of 1940 we therefore tried to achieve closer collaboration with Japan. Japan was trying to do the same with us and that led to the signing of the pact. The aim, or substance, of this pact was a political, military, and economic alliance. There is no doubt, however, that it was intended as a defensive alliance; and we considered it as such from the start. By that I mean that it was intended in the first place to keep the United States out of the war; and I hoped that a combination of this kind might enable us to make peace with England after all. The pact itself was not based on any plan for aggression or world domination, as has often been asserted. That is not true; its purpose was, as I have just said, to arrive at a combination which would enable Germany to introduce a new order in Europe and would also allow Japan to reach a solution acceptable to her in East Asia, especially in regard to the Chinese problem.

That was what I had in mind when I negotiated and signed the pact. The situation was not unfavorable; the pact might possibly keep the United States neutral and isolate England so that we might all the same arrive at a compromise peace, a possibility of which we never lost sight during the whole course of the war, and for which we worked steadily.

DR. HORN: What effect, according to the embassy reports which reached you, did the Anschluss of Austria and the Munich Agreement have on the United States?

VON RIBBENTROP: There is no doubt that the occupation of Austria and the Munich Agreement produced a much more unfavorable feeling towards Germany in the United States.

DR. HORN: In November 1938 the American Ambassador at Berlin was recalled to Washington to report to his government, and the normal diplomatic relations with Germany were thus broken off. According to your observations, what were the reasons for this measure?

VON RIBBENTROP: We never really found out the details, and we very much regretted it, as it forced us to recall our own Ambassador in Washington, at least to call him back to make a report. It is, however, evident that this measure was determined by the whole attitude of the United States. Many incidents took place about that time which gradually convinced the Fuehrer that sooner or later they would bring the United States into the war against us.

Permit me to mention a few examples. President Roosevelt's attitude was defined for the first time in the "quarantine speech" which he made in 1937. The press then started an energetic campaign. After the ambassador was recalled the situation grew more

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critical and the effect began to make itself felt in every sphere of German-American relations.

I believe that many documents dealing with the subject have been published in the meantime and that a number of these have been submitted by the Defense, dealing, for instance, with the attitude adopted by certain United States diplomats at the time of the Polish crisis; the cash-and-carry clause was then introduced which could benefit only Germany's enemies; the ceding of destroyers to England; the so-called Lend-Lease Bill later on; and in other fields the further advance of the United States towards Europe: The occupation of Greenland, Iceland, on the African Continent, *et cetera*; the aid given to Soviet Russia after the outbreak of this war. All these measures strengthened the Fuehrer's conviction that sooner or later he would certainly have to reckon with a war against America. There is no doubt that the Fuehrer did not, in the first instance, want such a war; and I may say that I myself, as I think you will see from many of the documents submitted by the Prosecution, again and again did everything I could, in the diplomatic field, to keep the United States out of this war.

DR. HORN: In the summer of 1941 President Roosevelt gave his so-called "firing order" to the American Fleet in order to protect transports carrying armaments to England. How did Hitler and German diplomacy react to this order?

VON RIBBENTROP: It was a very regrettable event for us. I am not competent to deal with technical details but I remember exactly that Hitler was greatly excited about this order. I believe it was in a speech at some meeting -- probably at Munich, but I do not remember exactly -- that he replied to this speech and issued a warning in answer to the announcement. I happen to remember the form which his reply took, because at the time I thought it rather odd. He said that America had given the order to fire on German ships. "I gave no order to fire but I ordered that the fire be returned"; I believe that is the way he expressed it.

Documentary evidence of these events reached us in the diplomatic service, but the Navy is better informed on the subject than I am. After that, I believe, there were protests and publications about the measures which made the German attitude plain; I cannot give you exact details of these protests without referring to the documents themselves.

DR. HORN: Did Japan notify Germany in advance of her attack on Pearl Harbor?

VON RIBBENTROP: No, she did not. At the time I tried to induce Japan to attack Singapore, because it was impossible to make peace with England and I did not know what military measures

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we could take to achieve this end. In any case, the Fuehrer directed me to do everything I could in the diplomatic field to weaken England's position and thus achieve peace. We believed that this could best be done through an attack by Japan on England's strong position in East Asia. For that reason I tried to induce Japan, at that time, to attack Singapore.

After the outbreak of the Russo-German war, I also tried to make Japan attack Russia, for I thought that in this way the war could be ended most speedily. Japan, however, did not do that. She did the -- she did neither of the things we wanted her to do, but instead, she did a third. She attacked the United States at Pearl Harbor. This attack came as a complete surprise to us. We had considered the possibility of Japan's attacking Singapore, that is England, or perhaps Hong Kong, but we never considered an attack on the United States as being to our advantage. We knew that in the case of an attack on England, there was a possibility that the United States might intervene; that was a question which, naturally, we had often considered. We hoped very much, however, that this would not happen and that America would not intervene. The first news I received of the attack on Pearl Harbor was through the Berlin press, and then from the Japanese Ambassador Oshima. I should like to say under oath that all other reports, versions, or documentary evidence are entirely false. I would like to go even further to state that the attack came as a surprise even to the Japanese Ambassador -- at least he told me that.

DR. HORN: Does Your Lordship wish for a recess now?

THE PRESIDENT: Dr. Horn, how much longer are you going to take?

DR. HORN: Not much more, Your Honor. I should say 15 or 20 minutes.

THE PRESIDENT: Very well, we will recess for 10 minutes.

[A recess was taken.]

DR. HORN: What considerations caused Hitler and you to enter the war against the United States on the side of Japan?

VON RIBBENTROP: When the news of Pearl Harbor came, the Fuehrer had to make a decision. The text of the Tripartite Pact bound us to assist Japan only in case of an attack against Japan herself. I went to see the Fuehrer, explained the legal aspect of the situation and told him that, although we welcomed a new ally against England, it meant we had a new opponent to deal with as well, or would have one to deal with if we declared war on the United States.

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The Fuehrer then decided that the United States had already fired upon our ships and thereby had practically created a state of war; that it was therefore only a question of form, or, at least, that this official state of war might supervene at any moment, as a result of an incident; and that in the long run it was impossible that this state of affairs in the Atlantic continue without a German-American war.

He then instructed me to draft a note -- which he subsequently altered -- and to hand the American Ambassador his papers.

DR. HORN: How did the Foreign Office co-operate with Germany's allies during the war?

VON RIBBENTROP: We naturally had close co-operation with Italy. By that I mean that in the further course of war, we were forced to all intents and purposes to take charge of all military operations there ourselves, or, at least, to take joint charge of them.

Co-operation with Japan was very difficult, for the simple reason that we could communicate with the Japanese Government only by air. We had contact with them from time to time through U-boats, but there was no co-ordinated military or political plan of campaign. I believe that on this point General Marshall's view is correct, namely, that there was no close strategic co-operation or planning of any kind; and, really, there was not any.

DR. HORN: How was co-operation with Italy?

VON RIBBENTROP: As I have just said, we naturally had very close co-operation with Italy, but difficulties arose through the many heterogeneous influences at work; and Italy proved herself, right from the start, to be a very weak ally in every respect.

DR. HORN: Why, in the course of the Russian campaign, did you suggest to Hitler the conclusion of separate peace agreements?

VON RIBBENTROP: A certain atmosphere of confidence between the Soviet Government and ourselves had been created at Moscow, between Stalin, Molotov and myself, and also extending to the Fuehrer. For instance, the Fuehrer told me that he had confidence in Stalin, whom he considered one of the really great men of history, and whose creation of the Red Army he thought a tremendous achievement; but that one could never tell what might happen. The power of the Soviets had grown and developed enormously. It was very difficult to know how to deal with Russia and make an agreement with her again. I myself always tried, through diplomatic and other channels, to maintain contact to a certain extent, because I still believed and hoped that some sort of peace could be made which would relieve Germany in the East and allow her to concentrate her forces in the West and even lead, perhaps, to a general peace. With this in view, I proposed to the Fuehrer, for the first time, in the

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winter of 1942, it was before Stalingrad, that an agreement should be reached with Russia. I did that after the Anglo-American landing in Africa which caused me great misgivings. Adolf Hitler -- I met him in the train at Bamberg -- most emphatically rejected the idea of any such peace or peace feelers, because he thought that if it became known, it would be liable to create a spirit of defeatism, *et cetera*. I had suggested to him at the time that we should negotiate peace with Russia on a very moderate basis.

Secondly, in 1943, I again advised the Fuehrer in a lengthy, written exposition, to seek such a peace. I think it was after the collapse of Italy. The Fuehrer was at that time open to consider such a peace; and he drafted a possible mutual line of demarcation which might be adopted, and said that he would let me know definitely on the following day. Next day, however, I did not receive any authorization or directive from him. I think that the Fuehrer probably felt that it was impossible to heal the breach between National Socialism and communism and that such a peace would be no more than an armistice.

I made one or two further attempts but the Fuehrer held the view that a decisive military success must be achieved first, and only after that could we start negotiations, otherwise the negotiations would be useless.

If I were asked to express an opinion as to whether such negotiations would have been likely to succeed, I would say that I think it very doubtful. I believe that, considering the strong stand taken by our opponents, especially England, even since the beginning of the war, there was never any real chance of Germany's attaining peace; and that holds good for both the East and the West. And I am convinced that with the formulation at Casablanca of the demand for unconditional surrender, the possibility ceased entirely to exist. I base my opinion not on purely abstract considerations, but on continuous feelers, made through indirect channels, often unidentifiable as such, by the other side, and which expressed the opinion of important personalities with a guiding influence on policy in those countries. They were determined to fight it out to the bitter end. I think the Fuehrer was right when he said that such negotiations would serve no purpose.

DR. HORN: To come to a different subject, the witness Lahousen has testified here that in September 1939 a conversation took place in Hitler's private train at which you were also present, and which dealt with the instigation of a rebellion in the Polish Ukraine. What led to this conversation and what part did you play in the discussion?

VON RIBBENTROP: I remember that in the course of the Polish campaign Admiral Canaris, who was at the time Chief of the Wehrmacht Counterintelligence Service, came to see me, as he sometimes

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did when he was making a short personal visit. I was in my compartment on the Fuehrer's train at the time. I do not remember that the witness Lahousen was present; I had the impression when I saw Herr Lahousen here that I had never seen him before. Canaris came to me from time to time to tell me about his activities in the Intelligence and other fields. He did so on this occasion; and I believe it was he who told me that he had set all his agents to fomenting a revolt among the Ukrainian and other minorities in the rear of the Polish Army. He certainly received no instructions or directives from me, as was alleged here -- and cannot have received any, for these two reasons:

1. The German Foreign Minister was never in a position to give any directives to a military authority.
2. At the beginning of the Polish campaign, the German Foreign Office was not at all concerned with the question of the Ukraine, and similar questions -- or at any rate I myself was not. I was not even sufficiently well acquainted with the details to be able to give directives.

DR. HORN: The Prosecution have submitted a circular issued by the Foreign Office ...

VON RIBBENTROP: May I say something more about this? The witness Lahousen has alleged that I said that houses were to be burned down or villages were to be burned down and the Jews were to be killed. I would like to state categorically that I never said such a thing.

Canaris was with me in my car at that time, and it is possible, although I do not remember it exactly, that I may have seen him going out later on. Apparently he received instructions which originated with the Fuehrer as to the attitude he was to take in Poland with regard to the Ukrainian and other questions. There is no sense in the statement ascribed to me, because especially in the Ukraine -- the Ukrainian villages -- those were Ukrainians living in them, and they were not our enemies but our friends; it would have been completely senseless for me to say that these villages should be burned down. Secondly, as regards killing the Jews, I can only say that this would have been entirely contrary to my inner conviction and that the killing of the Jews never entered the mind of anybody at that time. I may say, in short, that all this is absolutely untrue. I have never given instructions of this kind, nor could I have done so, nor even a general indication on those lines. May I add that I remember that Herr Lalioussen himself was not quite convinced that I had made this statement; at least, that was my impression.

DR. HORN: Have you anything to say about the Foreign Office circular submitted by the Prosecution and bearing the title: "The Jewish question as a factor in foreign politics in the year 1938"?

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VON RIBBENTROP: I saw this circular here for the first time. Here are the facts: There was a section in the Foreign Office which was concerned with Party matters and questions of ideology. That department undoubtedly co-operated with the competent departments of the Party. That was not the Foreign Office itself. I saw the circular here. It seems to me that it is on the same lines as most of the circulars issued at the time for the information and training of officials, and so on. It even might possibly have gone through my office, but I think that the fact that it was signed by a section chief and not by myself or by the state secretary, should prove that I did not consider the circular very important even if I did see it. Even if it did go through my office or pass me in some other way, I certainly did not read it because in principle I did not read such long documents, but asked my assistants to give me a short summary of the contents. I may add that I received hundreds of letters in the course of the day's work, some of which were read to me, and also circulars and decrees which I signed, and many of which I did not acquaint myself with. I wish to state, however, that if one of my officials signed the circular it goes without saying that I assume full responsibility for it.

DR. HORN: The Prosecution have several times spoken of the Geneva Convention. Your name was frequently mentioned in this connection also. What was your attitude toward the Geneva Convention?

VON RIBBENTROP: I believe, and many people will and could confirm it, that from the beginning of the war the Foreign Office and I have always supported the Geneva Convention in every way. I should like to add that the military authorities always showed much understanding for these things -- at least, for the affairs I had to deal with. If, later on, this no longer held good in every respect, it was due to the rigors of war, and possibly to the harshness of the Fuehrer.

As to the terror-fliers, I must state that in 1943 and 1944 the English and American air raids gradually became a terrible threat to Germany. I saw this for the first time in Hamburg, and I remember this event

because I was with the Fuehrer at the time and I described to him the terrifying impression I had received. I do not believe that anyone who has not experienced such a raid and its results can imagine what it means. It is evident that we Germans, and especially Adolf Hitler, continually sought means to master this menace.

I must also mention the terrible attack on Dresden, and I would like to ask the Tribunal's permission to name a witness, the former Danish Minister Richard, who was there during the attack and described it to me 2 days later. It was, therefore, self-evident that

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the problem of terror-fliers had to be solved somehow by the Fuehrer. This was in contrast to our view insofar as we wanted to find a solution which would not infringe upon the Geneva Convention, or at least a solution which could be publicly proclaimed to our enemies. My department was not directly concerned with the question, for we had nothing to do with defense problems which were taken care of by the military authorities, the police and those responsible for home policy. But we were indirectly concerned where the matter was affected by the Geneva Convention, and my point of view, which I frequently expressed, was that if any steps were taken an official proclamation should be published, giving a definition of a terror-flier, and stating that these terror-fliers convicted or airmen suspected of an attack upon the civilian population would be tried by courts-martial. Geneva would then be officially notified of this measure or preparatory measure and then the enemy would be informed through the protecting powers. Fliers found guilty of deliberate terrorist raids by the courts-martial would be sentenced; if not, they would revert to the normal status of prisoners of war. But this was never carried out in practice. It was not a suggestion by me but an idea which I expressed to Hitler in the course of conversations on one or two occasions and which was not put into practice because, in practice, it was impossible to find a definition for these raids. I believe some mention was also made of a conference supposed to have taken place in Klessheim during which I was said to have proposed or supported farther-reaching measures. I remember quite clearly that this conference did not take place. I do not believe, or at least, I do not remember, that I ever discussed this question at that time with Himmler, with whom I was not at that time on good terms, or Goering, whom I did not see very often. I believe that it is possible that the subject was brought up in a conversation during an official visit to Klessheim, as often happened, with the Fuehrer, but that I do not know any more, I do know one thing that if allusion is made to a more thorough-going proposal emanating from me it can refer only to the following: At the time we were anxious to arrive at a clear definition of these attacks by terror-fliers and in the course of discussion various suggestions were made for the definition of certain categories of attacks, such as machine-gunning from the air, as terror attacks. It is possible that this note, or whatever it was, came into being in this way: That the person in question knew my views, that is, the person trying to find a practical solution -- if one was arrived at -- to agree officially with the Geneva Convention or could, at least, have been officially discussed with Geneva.

Another document has also been submitted in this connection. I believe it was a suggestion for an expert opinion on this question by the Foreign Office. I do not remember exactly how this expert opinion came to be given, whether it was done on my orders or

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whether it was the result of a discussion with the Wehrmacht authorities concerned, who wanted to know the opinion of the Foreign Office. All I know is that the Wehrmacht always attached great importance to an exact knowledge of our opinion with regard to the Geneva Convention. I remember that expert opinion, however, and that I have seen it. I am now said to have approved it. It would take too long to go into details, but that is not correct. I remember that I submitted that expert opinion to the Fuehrer as being a very important matter which I could not deal with alone. I think that the Fuehrer -- or I remember rather exactly, that the Fuehrer dismissed it as nonsense at the time, so this expert opinion was not well received by the Fuehrer. In the further course of events all we heard, because we were only concerned indirectly, was that no order of any sort was issued by the Fuehrer or any Wehrmacht authority, because the Wehrmacht shared our very views on this subject. Admittedly, I do not know that in detail; but I can say with absolute certainty that since this question of defense against terror-fliers was under consideration, and afterwards, not a single case of lynching came to my ears. I did not hear that this had happened until I was here.

DR. HORN: The other day witness Dahlerus was brought here. How long have you known Dahlerus?

VON RIBBENTROP: I believe that I saw Dahlerus here for the first time. Of course, it is possible that I may have seen him once from a distance or possibly in the Reich Chancellery during one of his apparently frequent visits to the Fuehrer. But I do not remember him, and when I saw him here I had the impression that I had never seen him before.

DR. HORN: Were you in a position to exercise influence regarding planes for visitors to the Reich Government?

VON RIBBENTROP: No, I had no such influence.

DR. HORN: One more question on a different subject. What real estate was at your disposal in your official capacity as Foreign Minister?

VON RIBBENTROP: The other day the British Prosecutor declared that, to begin with, I had one house and later on I had six. I want to clear this matter up for the Court. After losing my entire fortune in America, I became quite wealthy again through my own work. As such, and in other ways, too, I had certain possibilities and I also had funds through relatives, through my wife. I built a house in Berlin-Dahlem, in 1922-23 and bought several lots there. We lived there for many years. Furthermore, in 1934 -- I want to emphasize the fact that this had nothing to do with my political activities, because at the time I had only just started them -- I bought

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a small house and estate called Sonnenburg, near Berlin, with some funds which my wife inherited, I think, and from funds of my own.

The other -- or I should say rather that since that time I have not acquired a square yard of property in Germany or anywhere else. The other houses mentioned by the British Prosecutor, that is, the so-called Schloss Fuschl, this became known because various foreign statesmen were received there during the war. That is not really a castle but a tower, an old hunting tower of the Archbishops of Salzburg. The Fuehrer had put it at my disposal to have a roof over my head when I was at Obersalzberg, because he did not want me to stay in the hotel, which was always very crowded, and I had to bring my staff with me. Fuschl was never my personal property, but was a so-called Foreign Office establishment, which belonged exclusively to the state and was kept up by the state. I knew the former owners of this castle or tower only by name and, therefore, I cannot give any information about them. I only heard that this building was confiscated by the Reich Government, along with other property belonging to political opponents in Austria.

The second house mentioned here was, I think, a house in Slovakia. There was also a question of a third house in Sudetenland, which was alleged to be the property of a Count Czernin. I believe I can explain this also. Here are the facts: The Fuehrer had given me permission to arrange hunting parties to which I could invite foreign statesmen for the purpose of more informal talks. I was also a hunter, so the Foreign Office, that is to say the Reich Government, had leased ground from some of the farmers in Sudetenland for hunting purposes, along with a suitably impressive house. I believe they were rented for only a couple of years; they were not even purchased. The same thing was done in the case of a hunting ground in Slovakia. I do not think that this was our property at all. The Slovak Government placed it at our disposal for a few days every year, to shoot deer. It was a hunting lodge in which I once or twice spent 2 or 3 days, but it has nothing to do with my own property.

Another place was mentioned, a house called Tanneck. I may mention that I have never even seen this house, situated, I believe, in the Rhineland. According to the description which I have received, it is a small house occupied by a man responsible for looking after several horses. I had formerly served in the cavalry and was interested in horses which had been purchased in France by the State, from the well-known racing stable owner, the Aga Khan in Normandy, as they would otherwise have been ruined. I should like to emphasize the fact that full compensation -- I always paid particular attention to this -- was paid for the horses, as I think the Aga Khan will gladly confirm. They were brought to Germany with the

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Fuehrer's full consent, although he was not greatly interested in horses; but he understood my point of view. These horses were later to be put in the stud farm Grabitz, which belonged to the Reich Government.

If the Tribunal permits, I would like to say that, as far as my personal affairs are concerned, my Defense Counsel will present the necessary testimony. I gave instructions at that time that I did not want to have a single Reichsmark more at the end of my term of office than I had at the beginning, with the exception of two gifts which I received from the Fuehrer, but most of which, or at least part of which, I believe, has since been spent by the State for my official expenses.

DR. HORN: One last question: During your activities, in regard to foreign policy, did you see any possibility of realizing prospects of revision which had been conceded to Germany but which had not materialized?

VON RIBBENTROP: That was precisely the great problem out of which, in the final analysis, this war developed. As Adolf Hitler often told me, he wanted to build up an ideal social state in Europe after the solution of the problems which he had recognized as vital. He wanted to erect buildings, *et cetera*; that was his aim. Now, the realization of these aims defined as vital by the Fuehrer was greatly hampered by the petrified political system, which had been established in Europe and the world in general.

We, the Fuehrer, and then I myself on his order -- so I believe I can be the chief witness -- always tried to solve these problems through diplomatic and peaceful channels. I brooded many nights over the League of Nations -- day and night over Paragraph 19 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, but the difficulty was that the Fuehrer was not in a position, or was convinced that it was simply impossible to obtain results through negotiation -- at least, without having strong armed forces to back him up. The mistake was, I believe, that, although Paragraph 19 was a very good paragraph of the Covenant of the League of Nations, and one which we all would have been very willing to sign and follow or one which we did sign and would have followed, no means of putting it into practice existed. That gradually created a situation in which the powers, and that is quite natural, who wanted to retain this state of petrification, as I might call it, or status quo, opposed any steps taken by Germany, which of course, caused reaction on the part of the Fuehrer, until finally it reached the point, the very tragic point, where this great war began over a question like Danzig and the Corridor, which could have been solved comparatively easy.

DR. HORN: I have no more questions.

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THE PRESIDENT: Dr. Horn, I do not think it would be possible to go any further with the examination of the witness today, but the Tribunal would welcome your assistance and the assistance of the Prosecution with reference to your documents, if you could tell us what the position is with reference to your documents, and if the Prosecution could tell us how far they have been able to see these documents since they have been translated and how far they have been able to make up their minds as to what documents they wish to object to and what documents they are prepared to admit as being offered in evidence before us. Could you tell us what the position is with reference to these documents; how many of your documents have been translated?

DR. HORN: A gentleman from the British Prosecution told me this morning that the English Document Book will be ready on Monday and that I can discuss with him the question of what documents will be admitted. He also told me that the British Prosecution would arrange everything with the other delegations of the Prosecution, so that on Tuesday I should be in a position to submit the remaining documents and, I believe, this could be done in 2 or 3 hours. I want to submit these documents in groups and do not wish to read too much from them, but only explain to the Tribunal my reason for asking them to take judicial notice of these documents.

THE PRESIDENT: You said, did you not, it would take you no longer than 2 or 3 hours to explain the documents after you had come to the arrangement with the Prosecution?

DR. HORN: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: And have you any other witnesses to call besides the defendant?

DR. HORN: No. I would like only to submit an affidavit by a witness requested by me, Counsellor of Legation Gottfriedsen, dealing with the personal financial circumstances of the Defendant Von Ribbentrop, former Minister for Foreign Affairs. Gottfriedsen was the Foreign Office official whose task was to look after the official income of the Foreign Minister and who is also very well acquainted with his private financial affairs. He can give information about the personal and official estates belonging to the Foreign Minister and the Foreign Ministry. I have embodied this information in the form of a few questions in an affidavit. If the Prosecution have no objection to this affidavit, I could dispense with the calling of the witness, Gottfriedsen. However, if the Prosecution want him to appear, then I would question him on the contents of the affidavit.

I have no other witnesses for the Defendant Von Ribbentrop. When all my documents will have been presented, the case for the Defense will be concluded.

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THE PRESIDENT: Would the Prosecution tell us their view on this?

SIR DAVID MAXWELL-FYFE: My Lord, as far as the British Prosecution is concerned, we have now had six document books, I think, taking us up to Number 214, roughly two-thirds of the documents which Dr. Horn wishes to tender, and we have been able to go through up to Number 191. I made out a list -- I could hand one to the Court and give Dr. Horn another one -- of those documents that we object to, which are very briefly set out. I should think we object to something like 70 or 80, between the Numbers 45 and 191, maybe a little more. The Soviet Delegation are, I think, in a position to tender their objections, which are practically entirely in accord with ours, though they were prepared separately. M. Champetier de Ribes has at least two batches of documents to which he wishes to make objections. I think I may say that Mr. Dodd is more or less leaving this point to me and will act in accordance with the British Delegation's view on the point. So that is the position. It probably would be convenient if I handed in a very outlined list of objections which I have up to date.

THE PRESIDENT: The Tribunal would like to know, Sir David, what the position of the Prosecution is about the translation of the documents. You remember that the Tribunal did make an order that the Prosecution should object to documents, if possible, before they were translated, so as to avoid unnecessary translations, and in the event of any disagreement between the Prosecution and the Defense any matter should be referred to the Tribunal. It was thought that there were a great number of documents on which agreement could be achieved in that way, and the labor and time taken up in translating would be obviated.

SIR DAVID MAXWELL-FYFE: Yes. The difficulty we have been in over these documents, is that we did our best to try to formulate our view on the index, but it is a very difficult matter to form a view when you get a short description of only a line and a half about a document. But it might be that that would be the most practical way of doing it, despite its difficulty. If the Prosecution were given an index with as good a description as possible of the document, the Prosecution then formulated their objections on the index, and the Tribunal heard any outstanding differences before the documents were translated, I should think -- I am afraid I can put it only tentatively -- it would be worth a trial. Otherwise, you would get a terrible blockage in the Translation Division of the Tribunal by a vast number of documents, such as we have had in this case, to which ultimately we are going to make fun and numerous objections, but that holds up the translation of all the documents belonging to the subsequent proceedings. So I should be

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prepared -- and I think my colleagues would support me -- in making a trial, if the Tribunal thought it could be done, to hand in an objection on a list of documents and see if we could in that way arrive at the results which would obviate the necessity of translating them all.

THE PRESIDENT: Would it be of assistance to the Prosecution, supposing the defendants' counsel were to give them the entire documents in German with also a full index in English, and then the Prosecution, or some member of the Prosecution who is familiar with German, could go through the documents in German and the Prosecution can then make up their minds in that way? Would that be an assistance to the Prosecution? They would have not only the index to inform them as to what was the nature of the documents, but they would have the documents in German.

SIR DAVID MAXWELL-FYFE: I think that would be a great help, especially if he underlined the more material passages.

THE PRESIDENT: Then, with the co-operation of the defendants' counsel, some measure of agreement might be arrived at as to what were the necessary documents to lay before the Tribunal.

SIR DAVID MAXWELL-FYFE: Yes, I think that could be done, My Lord.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, then, Sir David, with reference to the immediate future, on Monday, of course, some of the defendants' counsel may wish to ask questions of the Defendant Ribbentrop and

then the Prosecution may wish to cross-examine him, and that, I suppose, might possibly take all Monday.

SIR DAVID MAXWELL-FYFE: I think that is highly probable, My Lord.

THE PRESIDENT: Under those circumstances, if the scheme which Dr. Horn has outlined is carried out, there would not necessarily be any delay at all because by Tuesday morning his documents would have been all examined by the Prosecution and the objections to them would have been put in, and he could then go through, as he says, in 2 or 3 hours, the documents which remain for the consideration of the Tribunal.

SIR DAVID MAXWELL-FYFE: I respectfully agree, My Lord.

THE PRESIDENT: Then the Tribunal would like to know what the position is with reference to the next defendant. It may be that on Tuesday after the midday adjournment the case of Defendant [Keitel](#) would come on. Now, are his documents in order? As far as I remember, most of his documents are documents which have already been put in evidence.

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SIR DAVID MAXWELL-FYFE: A great many.

THE PRESIDENT: Is that not so?

SIR DAVID MAXWELL-FYFE: Perhaps Dr. Nelte could help us.

THE PRESIDENT: If he would, yes.

DR. NELTE: Mr. President, I am ready to begin at any time. The documents have been presented and affidavits were already presented to the Prosecution last week. I am waiting only for the Prosecution to decide as to the relevancy of those documents which the defendant has submitted as his own statements and which are to be submitted in order to shorten the examination.

SIR DAVID MAXWELL-FYFE: I have not had the chance of going through them myself but, as a matter of principle, we have always been quite prepared that a statement should be read so long as the witness is there to be cross-examined. If the Tribunal has no objection, there will be none from the Prosecution on that procedure.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, the Tribunal has no objection at all to that method of presenting written documents, provided the Prosecution does not object to them, and, therefore, no crossexamination is necessary. Could Dr. Nelte tell us whether the documents which he wishes to present, insofar as they have not already been put in evidence, have been translated yet?

DR. NELTE: They all were sent to the translation office and the last two documents were sent 3 days ago. I assume, therefore, that the delegations of the Prosecution have, in the meantime, received the translations.

THE PRESIDENT: Have you received them, Sir David?

SIR DAVID MAXWELL-FYFE: No, My Lord, we have not received them.

DR. NELTE: Perhaps they have not been distributed yet. Several or about two-thirds of the documents were translated into French and English about two weeks ago and are ready. I subsequently also sent these documents to the Russian Delegation so that they could be translated into Russian.

SIR DAVID MAXWELL-FYFE: I am told, My Lord, from General Mitchell, that the documents are translated. They have not yet been distributed.

THE PRESIDENT: Then there ought to be no cause for delay in connection with the Defendant Keitel's case.

SIR DAVID MAXWELL-FYFE: My Lord, I do not think so.

DR. NELTE: No.

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THE PRESIDENT: Then, does the same apply to the Defendant Kaltenbrunner, who is the next one? Dr. Kauffmann, are your documents yet translated?

DR. KAUFFMANN: Mr. President, I have only a very few affidavits and there is no doubt that they will be in the hands of the Prosecution in due time.

THE PRESIDENT: One moment. So that you will be quite ready to go on then?

DR. KAUFFMANN: Yes, after Keitel, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, after Keitel, very well. Sir David, then you will present to us the objections which you are making to Dr. Horn's documents, and the Soviet Prosecutor will present his objections.

SIR DAVID MAXWELL-FYFE: Yes, I shall hand them in as far as I have gone, if I may, at once.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, and M. Champetier de Ribes, so far as he has any.

SIR DAVID MAXWELL-FYFE: If My Lordship please, yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Very well, the Tribunal will adjourn.

[The Tribunal adjourned until 1 April 1946 at 1000 hours.]

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